

## *Footprints*

*One night I had a dream. I was walking along the beach with the Lord, and across the skies flashed scenes from my life. In each scene I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One was mine, and one was the Lord's.*

*When the last scene of my life appeared before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand, and to my surprise I noticed that many times along the path of my life there was only one set of footprints. And I noticed that it was at the lowest and saddest times in my life.*

*I asked the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way. But I notice that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why you left my side when I needed you most."*

*The Lord replied: "My precious child, I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, where you see only one set of footprints.*

### **Scripture and Rosary Service**

7:00 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2026  
St. Ann's Catholic Church, Miller, South Dakota

### **Funeral Mass**

10:30 a.m., Saturday, March 28, 2026  
St. Ann's Catholic Church, Miller, South Dakota

### **Celebrant**

Father Tyler Mattson

### **Placing of the Pall**

Luke & Alicia Mattke Family

### **Casketbearers**

Gary Yearous - Steve Resel - Ryan Spilde  
Jay Poindexter - Mike Runge - Luke Mattke - Dave Johnson

### **Honorary Casketbearers**

Doug DeBoer - Duane Resel - Glenn Ramsey  
Joel Christiansen - Mark Zens - Matt Zens - Jeff Meyer  
Joe Schlichte - Brian Peterman - Dennis Letsche - Tom Brace  
Mark Wangsness - Dwane Chipman - Steve Yearous

### **Ushers**

Joel Christiansen & Chris Odden

### **Lectors**

Susi Odden & Robin Strain

### **Giftbearers**

Jesse & Ella Mattke, Harper Spilde

### **Guestbook**

Ronda Zens & Sue Olsen

### **Musical Selections**

"Amazing Grace"  
"Here I Am Lord"  
"On Eagle's Wings" - Brian Peterman  
"Song of Farewell"  
"How Great Thou Art"

### **Musicians**

Connie Schroeder  
St. Ann's Choir

### **Burial**

St. Ann's Catholic Cemetery  
Miller, South Dakota

*The family warmly invites you to join them for lunch and continued fellowship at the church following the burial.*



*In Memory Of*  
*Roger Joseph Zens*  
**January 3, 1944 - March 21, 2026**





Roger Zens, 82, of Miller, passed away Saturday, March 21, 2026, at Highmore Health.

Roger was born on January 3, 1944, in Miller, SD, to Norbert and Alfreda (Faust) Zens. He was baptized in the old wooden church that was a block east of the old Midwest Supply building. When the Priest reached across to get the Holy Water, his vestment caught on fire, and the Priest then ran out of the church as fast as he could go. His dad, Norbert, ran after him and tackled him to the ground to help put out the fire on his vestment. No one got hurt, but Roger thought that was the point his folks decided that one child was enough.

He spent his first two years of school at the Polo Catholic School. His schooling from 3rd grade through high school was at Miller School District. Then, he attended two years of college at Southern State College at Springfield, SD, majoring in Mechanics, which helped him throughout his lifetime journey. On November 3, 1965, he married Dorothy (Dottie) Marie Wangsness at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Miller. To this union, two children were born, Gina and Roger, Jr. Family time was spent camping and fishing.

Roger was a life member of St. Ann's Catholic Church, Knights of Columbus, and was an active caretaker of St. Ann's Cemetery. He served on the Industrial Development Board, known today as On Hand. Roger was also active in the Miller Jaycees, serving as President and held all local offices, as well as being the State District Director and Regional Director, and holding two State Vice President positions.

As a kid, after school, Roger ran a very large paper route for the Huron Plainsman. On Sunday mornings, to make sure he got to church on time, his mom helped him deliver the paper route. When he quit his paper route to help his dad out on the milk route, his paper route was divided up into three routes for the next delivery guys.

Roger worked with his father in the dairy business from the 7th grade on and started milk delivery at 5 a.m. from house to house, so his route would finish before school in the mornings. In later years, Roger applied for his Mechanics degree to help maintain his dad's fleet of trucks that were used on his dairy routes. His routes included the areas of Miller, Pierre, Mobridge, Gettysburg, and Redfield. Roger was also known to run as a relief driver for these routes, if need be.

When Roger's dad, Norbert, retired from the dairy business, Roger went on to manage Kennedy Houseboats for 18 years until the houseboat business moved out of state. From there, he went to work for Dennis Letsche at Midway Trailer Sales

in St. Lawrence as his camper service guy. At Dennis's retirement, Roger purchased the camper business and operated the business until his retirement.

During his retirement, he said he is "Only doing what he wants to do!". Some of that included: apple orchard maintenance and harvest delivery, maintaining St. Ann's Cemetery, and working in his shop on projects he always found to do. Like most of us, Roger had a bucket list, which he had crossed several things off, such as going to Alaska, Niagara Falls, NE Fall Colors trip, Christmas in Branson, MO, and Santa Fe, NM. Special times were shared with Brian Peterman and Randy and Karen Hedge when he took his son's 1966 GTO to car shows. Roger enjoyed life and his many friends.

Until Roger sold his backhoe in 2020, he worked hard to maintain the neighborhood he helped develop and lived in. He helped with road maintenance and snow removal. Roger always wanted to make sure everyone could get in and out and to work on time.

It was while he was maintaining the neighborhood that JoAnn Morford came to him to buy a lot to build her house on. Little did he know what that was going to do to his life in the next 26 plus years. JoAnn did not read the fine print of the contract that said he came with the lot she bought.

Through Roger's many challenges in his health care journey, he appreciated the local neighbors and friends, EMT's, and Miller Avera Clinic and Hospital doctors and staff that got him through his many trials and tribulations. This included getting him plane and chopper rides. He was a man of many lives, for sure!

Roger is survived by: his very special friend, JoAnn Morford; daughter, Gina (Les) Savey; daughter-in-law, Joann Dummer; granddaughter, Alicia (Luke) Mattke and her family; Harper Spilde, Ella and Jesse Mattke; stepbrother; Daryl (Sandy) Schmidt; stepsister; Mavis Johnson; sisters-in-law; Rose Fawcett, Harriet (Dwane) Chipman, and Sharon Vitters; brothers-in-law; Mark (Diane) Wangsness and Jerry (Louise) Wangsness; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Dorothy (Dottie); his parents, Norbert and Alfreda Zens; son, Roger Zens, Jr.; father and mother-in-law, Henry and Dorothy Wangsness; stepsister, Sharla Worthen; and many other extended family members.

